



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## **6202.0.30.002 - Technical Manual: Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Basic and Expanded CURF, Australia, Aug 2008**

Previous ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 08/07/2009

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## **Summary**

### **About this Release**

This Basic and Expanded Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) provide information from both the monthly Labour Force Survey and the related Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership supplementary survey.

Detailed labour force and demographic characteristics for the civilian population aged 15 years and over are included. In addition, for employees, data is provided on earnings, leave entitlements, superannuation, entitlement to other benefits and trade union membership.

Formerly: Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia: Basic and Expanded CURF, Technical Manual

## **Explanatory Notes**

### **Quality Declaration - Summary**

#### **QUALITY DECLARATION - SUMMARY**

##### **INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) are released in accordance with the conditions specified in the Statistics Determination section of the Census and Statistics Act 1905 (CSA). This ensures that confidentiality is maintained whilst enabling micro level data to be released. More information on the confidentiality practices associated with CURFs can be found under [How are CURF data confidentialised](#) and the [Microdata Entry Page](#)

For information on the institutional environment of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see [ABS Institutional Environment](#).

## **RELEVANCE**

The 2008 Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership CURF is available in Basic and Expanded formats. A detailed list of the data items and categories for the CURFs is available from the data item list provided in spreadsheet format as an attachment to the Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership - Basic and Expanded CURF, Technical Manual (cat. no. 6202.0.30.002). The differences between the 2008 Basic and Expanded CURF are detailed in Appendix 3 of the Technical manual.

Labour Force Survey data are a key element of labour market and other economic information. The principal objective is to facilitate the analysis and monitoring of social and economic aspects of the Australian labour market and working age population.

For the Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey, the collection of a range of socio-demographic and labour force characteristics makes the datasets produced from the survey extremely valuable for comparing and analysing the distribution of both weekly earnings and employment benefits across employees. Data are used in the development and review of wages and labour market policies, and in wage negotiation processes. Data on employment benefits are used to monitor the level of non-wage costs in employment. The survey is the only reliable source of data on the distribution of trade union members by socio-demographic and labour force characteristics.

## **TIMELINESS**

The first Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey CURF was released in 2005, based on August 2004 data (Basic CURF only). Subsequent CURF releases have been both Basic and Expanded CURFs (2006 and 2008 data). The next CURF release is expected to occur in July 2011 based on August 2010 data.

## **ACCURACY**

The Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership CURF contains individual person level data (unit records) and finer levels of detail for data items than what is otherwise published. For more information on the level of detail available from the CURFs refer to the CURF data item list.

The Labour Force Survey sample size in August 2008 was approximately one-third smaller than the sample size in August 2006. For the Labour Force Survey, the RSEs for estimates of employment and unemployment at the national, state and territory level are expected to be approximately 15% higher on average than those expected from the 2006 sample design. For the Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey, the sample reductions are expected to increase the standard errors for estimates by approximately 22% at the broad aggregate level, relative to the 2001 sample design. Detailed information about the sample reduction is provided in Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design, Nov 2007 (Second edition) (cat. no. 6269.0).

Estimates from the Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. Each person record contains two sets of replicate weights, one for the Labour Force Survey

and another set for the Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey. The purpose of these replicate weights is to enable the calculation of the RSE for each estimate produced from the CURF. For use of the replicate weights and sampling errors refer to the Using the CURF Microdata chapter in the Technical Manual.

Steps to confidentialise the data made available on the CURF are taken in such a way as to maximise the usefulness of the content while maintaining the confidentiality of respondents to ABS statistical collections. As a result, it may not be possible to exactly reconcile all the statistics produced from the CURF with published statistics.

For more information on the Survey Methodology, refer to the Survey Methodology chapter in the Technical Manual.

## **COHERENCE**

The Labour Force Survey was conducted as a National quarterly survey in 1964, while the monthly National survey commenced in February 1978.

The ABS has been conducting the Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey since 1999. Prior to 1999 this publication was titled Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution), Australia cat.no.(6310.0). Key changes made to the Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership Survey can be found in Chapter 21.2 of Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

In 2007, a change was made to the concept of earnings being measured to include amounts salary sacrificed. Employees are now asked to include salary sacrifice when estimating their earnings. In previous years this was not the case.

The differences between the 2006 and 2008 CURFs are detailed in Appendix 2 of the Technical Manual.

## **INTERPRETABILITY**

The Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership - Basic and Expanded CURF, Technical Manual (cat. no. 6102.0.55.002) is a key source for consultation when using a CURF. It includes survey objectives, methods and design; survey content; data quality and interpretation; output data items; and information about the availability of results; comparability with previous surveys; and the content of the CURF file.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

CURF microdata are not available to the public without special access being granted. All CURF users are required to read and abide by the Responsible Access to ABS Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) Training Manual. Application to access a particular CURF microdata can be done by following the steps listed in the [How to apply for Microdata](#), [Frequently Asked Questions](#). A full list of available CURFs can be viewed via the [Expected and available Microdata](#).

The Basic CURF can be accessed on CD-ROM, in addition to being accessed through

the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) and the ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL). The Expanded CURF can only be accessed through RADL and ABSDL.

More detail regarding types and modes of access to CURFs can be found on CURF Access Modes and Levels of Detail web page.

If you have any questions regarding access to CURF Microdata please contact the Microdata Access Strategies Section at <[microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au)> or call (02) 6252 7714.

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